

*** For Immediate Release ***

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Government and Media Relations

Date: March 10, 2023
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WSP Seeking Witnesses To Gold Selling Scams On Freeways

King County: The Washington State Patrol (WSP) has received several reports and interviewed three separate victims involving individuals selling fake jewelry on the freeways and ramps in the King County area in the past two weeks.

The reports are the same as ones received historically in this area and other parts of the state and around the country. Well-dressed individuals in higher end rental vehicles flag drivers down on the side of the freeway or ramps saying they need money for gas to get back home saying that they will pay them back more and/or giving the victim gold jewelry in exchange for the cash. This is typically and aggressive conversation and a demand for cash to help them.

Case #1: This occurred on March 2, 2023 around 4pm EB SR 520 to SB I-405. This victim drove to their bank after being stopped by the suspect and handed over \$10,000.00 in exchange for the gold jewelry shown below. The victim in this case described the suspect as a male of Middle Eastern descent.



Case #2: This occurred on March 7, 2023 around 10:40am WB SR 18 to SR 516. Two males in a brown KIA Cerato flagged over the victim and ultimately scammed \$4,000.00 from him. The victim advised one looked to be in his 60s and the other 45 years old and both appearing to be of Arabic descent.

Case #3: This occurred March 9, 2023 around 2pm SB I-405 to SB I-5. The suspect was described as a heavy set male with a black beard and mustache in a suit driving a gray BMW SUB with no front plate. The suspect advised he needed to get back to Miami. The victim was scammed out of \$1,000.00.

Washington State Patrol detectives are seeking anyone that may have information on these cases or any others not described above. Detectives would also like to speak with any other victims of this scam that have yet to contact police.

Besides being a scam and illegal these situations are also very unsafe as these suspects are stopping on freeways and ramps where pedestrians are not allowed and at times stepping out into traffic in order to get drivers to pull over. If you find yourself in this type of situation DO NOT STOP! Call 9-1-1 as soon as possible and give location and any description of suspects and vehicles.

Please contact Detective Ford at John.Ford@wsp.wa.gov.

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